

JOINT CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 26, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 12:20 p.m. in the Town Room at Town Hall.

Present: Elaine Brighty, Patricia Holland, Stephanie O’Keeffe, Kay Moran, Diana Stein, Douglas Slaughter

Absent: Kathleen Anderson, Molly Turner

Others present: John Musante, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director; Walter Wolnik; Scott Merzbach, Daily Hampshire Gazette

Minutes: The minutes of March 12 were **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0, 1 abstaining (Moran), 2 absent. The minutes of March 19 were **APPROVED** by a vote of 6-0, 2 absent. The minutes of Feb. 19 were **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0, 1 abstaining (Stein), 2 absent.

Town Report: Committee members **APPROVED** Musante’s draft of the JCPC report to be included in the Town’s Annual Report for FY 2008 by a vote of 5-0, 1 abstaining (Stein), 2 absent.

Final ranking of capital projects:

Musante described revisions to the draft capital plan spreadsheet he’s made since JCPC’s meeting March 19. Debt service was revised to reflect no borrowing for the quint, which was appropriated from the general fund. Funding of \$45,000 for feasibility studies of the North Amherst PRP was moved to FY 11 because the town’s not yet ready to proceed. \$95,000 for refurbishing the fire department’s ladder truck is back on the FY 10 list.

Items requested for FY 10 on the spread sheet resulting from the committee’s March 19 discussion, with Musante’s subsequent adjustments, would use 7.25% of the tax levy. Today’s task was to identify requested items to be deferred or eliminated in the likely event that some lesser percentage of the levy would be available: 7%, 6.67% (the proportional cut to capital if the town gets \$2.8 million less in state aid for FY 10 and no new revenue to replace that), and 6.5% (the percentage used during the financial crisis of the early 1990s). After several suggestions and considerable discussion, the committee **VOTED** 6-0, 2 absent, to adopt this prioritized list of items to cut, with the first to be cut at the top and the last at the bottom:

1. Town-wide GIS mapping/flood area analysis, \$100,000 (the town is working on possible federal funds). This cut would reduce capital spending to 7% of the levy.
2. Aerial ladder refurbishing, \$95,000, pushed back to FY 11. The fire chief said this is doable with the new quint going into service this coming summer.
3. Marks Meadow exterior doors, \$20,000. The School Committee may decide to close the school.
4. Downtown improvements matching fund, \$10,000.

5. Garbage/recycling body for one-ton dump truck purchased in FY 09, \$60,000. This would have allowed pickup of recyclables from downtown and parks, but committee members felt this isn't the time to start offering this new service.
6. Pickup truck for ballfield maintenance, \$25,000.
7. Leak repairs, War Memorial Pool, \$10,000. If operating budgets have to be cut deeply due to reduced revenue, it's unlikely the pool will open.
8. Public art maintenance, \$5,000.
9. Downtown wayfinding sign system, \$10,000. (\$15,000 of the total request remains in the budget.)
10. Jones Library public disability access computer, \$10,000. Would be good to have, but offers a new service.
11. Hitchcock Center Perry Room roof repair, \$5,000.
12. Fire prevention officer vehicle, \$32,000.
13. Schools maintenance fleet vehicle, \$30,000.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be April 30, 12:15 p.m., to determine what percentage of the tax levy to recommend allocating to capital expenditures, and to talk about FY 11-FY 14.

Appreciation: Brighty, whose term on the School Committee and JCPC is about to end, was thanked by committee members for her 9 ½ years of service on JCPC.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Submitted by Kay Moran, Acting Clerk